

Colwood Creek Ratepayers

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Mayor and Council:

Thank you for meeting with representatives of Colwood Creek Ratepayers.

Over the past several weeks, residents have devoted considerable time to understanding the history, status and future of Colwood Creek Park. We have done so under significant time pressure, as Council had already agreed in principle to the proposed community garden project before many residents became aware of its scale and implications.

The resulting public debate has revealed both strong community attachment to the park and significant concern regarding its future. While residents hold differing views regarding the proposed removal of approximately 80% of the park from the Agricultural Land Reserve, many share a common concern. We do not know what legal protections currently apply to the park, nor what protections would exist if the proposed ALR exclusion proceeds.

In recent weeks, we have reviewed historical records suggesting that Colwood Creek Park was dedicated for park purposes when the surrounding subdivision was established. We have found references in municipal planning documents which appear consistent with that intent. Yet, we do not know with certainty the park's current legal status or the legal protections that apply to it. We therefore respectfully request that the City identify and provide the documents that establish the legal status of Colwood Creek Park, including any subdivision dedication records, park dedication bylaws, title documents, covenants, agreements, council resolutions, or other records that define the park's legal status and protection. Given the upcoming public hearing regarding ALR exclusion, we believe this information should be made available to residents as soon as possible and well in advance of any decision regarding the removal of park land from the ALR.

Through our research, we have come to believe that understanding the park's legal status and long term protection is now one of the most important questions facing the community. We believe this question deserves careful public discussion before residents are asked to support the removal of park land from the Agriculture Land Reserve. If the park already benefits from strong legal protection, we believe that protection should be clearly communicated to the public. If it does not, we believe there is an opportunity to begin a constructive discussion regarding the strongest available legal protections for Colwood Creek Park and the steps required to achieve them.

Greater transparency regarding the park's legal status and future protection could help rebuild public confidence, reduce community division, and create a stronger foundation for future conversations about Colwood Creek Park.

We appreciate the opportunity to meet and look forward to continuing this discussion

Respectfully submitted by,

Hilary Mackey
(Retired Master Gardener)
President

Jim Gowriluk
(Retired Professional Forester)
Vice President